

Now Let All Who Favor Good Roads in Taney County Get Together and Push. We'll Do Our Part

NATION'S LABOR PROBLEM

OVER A MILLION AND A HALF WOMEN WORK AS FARM HANDS IN THE UNITED STATES.

By Peter Radford

Lecturer National Farmers' Union.

Our government never faced so tremendous a problem as that now lying dormant at the doors of congress and the legislatures, and which, when aroused, will shake this nation from center to circumference, and make civilization hide its face in shame. That problem is—women in the field.

The last federal census reports show we now have 1,514,000 women working in the field, most of them south of the Mason and Dixon line. There were approximately a million negro slaves working in the fields when liberated by the emancipation proclamation. We have freed our slaves and our women have taken their places in bondage. We have broken the shackles of the negroes and welded them upon our daughters.

The Chain-Gang of Civilization.
A million women in bondage in the southern fields form the chain-gang of civilization—the industrial tragedy of the age. There is no overseer quite so cruel as that of unrestrained greed, no whip that stings like the lash of suborned destiny, and no auctioneer's block quite so revolting as that of organized avarice.

The president of the United States was recently lauded by the press, and very properly so, for suggesting mediation between the engineers and railroad managers in adjusting their schedule of time and pay. The engineers threatened to strike if their wages were not increased from approximately ten to eleven dollars per day and service reduced from ten to eight hours and a similar readjustment of the overtime schedule. Our women are working in the field, many of them barefooted, for less than 50 cents per day, and their schedule is the rising sun and the evening star, and after the day's work is over they milk the cows, slop the hogs and rock the baby to sleep. Is anyone meditating over their problems, and to whom shall they threaten a strike?

Congress has listened approvingly to those who toll at the forge and behind the counter, and many of our statesmen have smiled at the threats and have fanned the flame of unrest among industrial laborers. But women are as surely the final victims of industrial warfare as they are the burden-bearers in the war between nations, and those who arbitrate and mediate the differences between capital and labor should not forget that when the expenses of any industry are unnecessarily increased, society foots the bill by drafting a new consignment of women from the home to the field. Pinch no Crumb From Women's Crust of Bread.

No financial award can be made without someone footing the bill, and we commend to those who accept the responsibility of the distribution of industrial justice, the still small voice of the woman in the field as she pleads for mercy, and we beg that they pinch no crumb from her crust of bread or put another patch upon her ragged garments.

We beg that they listen to the scream of horror from the eagle on every American dollar that is wrong from the brow of tolling women and hear the Goddess of Justice hiss at a verdict that increases the want of woman to satisfy the greed of man.

The women behind the counter and in the factory cry aloud for sympathy and the press thunders out in their defense and the pulpit pleads for mercy, but how about the woman in the field? Will not these powerful exponents of human rights turn their talent, energies and influence to her relief? Will the Goddess of Liberty enthroned at Washington hold the calloused hand and soothe the feverish brow of her sex who sows and reaps the nation's harvest or will she permit the male of the species to shove women—weak and weary—from the bread-line of industry to the back alleys of poverty?

Women and Children First.
The census enumerators tell us that of the 1,514,000 women who work in the fields as farm hands 409,000 are sixteen years of age and under. What is the final destiny of a nation whose future mothers spend their girlhood days behind the plow, pitching hay and hauling manure, and what is to become of womanly culture and refinement that grace the home, charm society and enthrone man to leap to glory in noble achievements if our daughters are raised in the society of the ox and the companionship of the plow?

In that strata between the ages of sixteen and forty-five are 950,000 women working as farm hands and many of them with suckling babes clinging at their breasts, as drenched in perspiration, they wield the scythe and guide the plow. What is to become of that nation where poverty breaks the crowns of the queens of the home; despair hurls a mother's love from its throne and hunger drives innocent children from the schoolroom to the no?

The census bureau shows that 155,000 of these women are forty-five years of age and over. There is no more pitiful sight in civilization than these saintly mothers of Israel stooped with age, drudging in the field from sun until sun and at night drenching their dingy pillows with the tears of despair as their aching hearts take

it all to God in prayer. Civilization strikes them a blow when it should give them a crown, and their only friend is he who broke bread with beggars and said: "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest."

Oh, America! The land of the free and the home of the brave, the world's custodian of chivalry, the champion of human rights and the defender of the oppressed—shall we permit our maidens fair to be torn from the hearthstone by the ruthless hand of destiny and chained to the plow? Shall we permit our faithful wives, whom we covenanted with God to cherish and protect, to be hurled from the home to the harvest field, and our mothers dear to be driven from the old arm chair to the cotton patch?

In rescuing our citizens from the forces of civilization, can we not apply to our fair Dixieland the rule of the sea—"women and children first?"

There must be a readjustment of the wage scale of industry so that the women can be taken from the field or given a reasonable wage for her services. Perhaps the issue has never been fairly raised, but the Farmers' Union, with a membership of ten million, puts its organized forces squarely behind the issue and we now enter upon the docket of civilization the case of "The Woman in the Field" and demand an immediate trial.

Suggests New Plan for School Reading

"The public school is one of the most wasteful institutions in the state," says J. L. Meriam, professor of school supervision at the University of Missouri at Columbia. "To illustrate this waste, take the buying of school books. When a class of thirty runs out of reading matter the parents pay \$10 for thirty new books, all alike. They have bought only 120 pages of new reading material. That class had better be supplied with different books which would give the pupils thirty times the amount of reading matter they are now getting in a large percentage of schools."

Professor Meriam says that reading is more efficiently taught from different readers than when each pupil has read the story two or three times. There is small chance for the pupil to become interested in what another pupil is reading if the story is stale to him. Again, there is no incentive to the reader to try to read well when he knows that no other pupil cares anything about his reading.

Put a new story into that pupil's hands. He is interested in it. He knows the rest of the class is interested, too. He has an incentive to do good reading.

Professor Meriam recommends that teachers gather clippings and have pupils gather clippings of stories that interest them. A file of stories gathered in this way will soon be an interesting part of a reading course.

In the University of Missouri Elementary School, which is under the direction of Professor Meriam as a practice school for the students in the School of Education, there is a large file of this sort extending over a number of years. Now, when a class is going to study a given subject, squirrels, for instance, the teacher can turn to the file and have perhaps fifty stories to read on this subject.

To aid in getting the teachers interested in better methods of teaching, Professor Meriam with the aid of the teachers in the University Elementary School, is working on two books dealing with reading in public schools. The first is a discussion of the school curriculum, with suggestions for changes, betterment, or variation. The second is a series of guides for teachers in the selection of readings for the pupils.

Getting a Stand of Alfalfa

In preparing a field for alfalfa I first sow cowpeas, planting 1 1/2 bushels to the acre. The peas are cut in September and the ground plowed just as deep as possible. Early in the winter I apply 10 to 15 loads of manure to the acre on this plowed ground spreading it evenly and leaving it undisturbed until April 15 or later. Then the ground is double disked and harrowed until a fine seedbed is ready for the nurse crop of oats and the alfalfa. The seedbed should be 3 or 4 inches deep, well pulverized and no clods. One bushel of oats an acre is sown and a spring-tooth harrow used to cover the oats. I use a drill for the alfalfa seed, fastening the hoes up and seeding on top of the ground. The drill is set to sow ten pounds, first seeding one way of the field and then to reverse. This cross sowing will completely cover the ground. Use a smoothing harrow to cover the

alfalfa seed, then run a light drag over the field. In two days the alfalfa will look as if it meant business.

I cut the oats before ripening, mowing and leaving them on the ground as long as possible. A week is not too long in fair weather. Then I cut the alfalfa back as fast as it gets high enough to cut, getting considerable hay from the first cuttings but leaving the last cutting on the ground for winter protection. During the winter put some more manure on the field and in the spring harrow and watch it grow. If it begins to turn yellow cut at once.

With plenty of manure scattered over all the field in the alfalfa will be green winter. I cut alfalfa when it begins to stool, as the next crop is then starting.

After removing the alfalfa harrow the field both ways with a spring-tooth harrow. If it looks as if the alfalfa will all be torn up go to the house and stay there while some other person completes the job. Harrow after every cutting. I have only 11 1/2 acres of alfalfa but it is amusing to listen to the advice of men who never paid a dollar for alfalfa seed. Don't listen to the fellow who says "it can't be did" but commence by seeding an acre and you will soon want more. When everything is burning up but your alfalfa you will wish the whole farm was in alfalfa.

I prefer spring seeding and a nurse crop as alfalfa is easily winter killed. Don't forget that alfalfa is a crop that needs cultivation and for this section the spring-tooth harrow is the implement to do the work with. Every year, for three years, I have sown 25 acres, planting timothy, clover, and orchard grass, but today the alfalfa field is the only thing I have to show for my labor and more than \$200 worth of seed. Alfalfa will grow on any land that is not too wet or too poor, and it is better than clover for poor soil. I sent to Enid, Okla., for one seed, sowing four bushels on 11 1/2 acres. The first 1 1/2 acres sown has been cut four times this season and is now 12 to 18 inches high.—J. B. Gilmore, Greene County, Missouri Ruralist.

Stock Owners Warned Against Impostors

Reports are now beginning to come into the department from several of the States quarantined for the foot-and-mouth disease that persons who have no connection whatsoever with the department are attempting to pass themselves off as Federal inspectors. There are several possible motives that might account for the existence of these impostors. In the outbreak of 1908 there were instances of men who obtained money from credulous victims who believed that in this way they would escape the inconvenience of quarantine and disinfection. This is, of course, a very simple form of extortion. Another motive may be the sale of some quack remedy for the disease.

Stock Owners Warned Against Impostors

Stock owners can protect themselves very easily against this fraud, for there is no specific remedy for the foot-and-mouth disease. Since the germ has never been isolated, it has never been possible as yet to find any serum that would act either as a cure or preventive, and the public may be quite certain that anyone who says he is an employee of the Department of Agriculture, and at the same time attempts to sell or even recommend anything of the sort, is simply an impostor. For this reason stock owners are warned not to allow strangers to visit their stock or attempt and demonstration of so-called cures by injections or otherwise.

There is, moreover, very great danger that such people might disseminate the disease. It is a well known fact that the germs can be carried on clothing. In infected territory, therefore, it is quite possible that a man who has come in contact with stricken animals may bring the disease to a perfectly healthy herd. This also accounts for much of the spread of hog cholera.

The department therefore recommends all farmers to keep their animals from coming in contact with all save those who have definite business with them.

It may also be urged against the validity of those New Haven indictments that the foreman of the grand jury parted his hair in the middle.

RAILROADS APPEAL TO PRESIDENT

The Common Carriers Ask for Relief—President Wilson Directs Attention of Public to Their Needs.

The committee of railroad executives, headed by Mr. Frank Trumbull, representing thirty-five of the leading railroad systems of the nation, recently presented to President Wilson a memorandum briefly reviewing the difficulties now confronting the railroads of the country and asking for the cooperation of the governmental authorities and the public in supporting railroad credits and recognizing an emergency which requires that the railroads be given additional revenues.

The memorandum recites that the European war has resulted in general depression of business on the American continent and in the dislocation of credits at home and abroad. With revenues decreasing and interest rates increasing the transportation systems of the country face a most serious crisis and the memorandum is a strong presentation of the candle burning at both ends and the perils that must ultimately attend such a conflagration when the flames meet is apparent to all. In their general discussion the railroad representatives say in part: "By reason of legislation and regulation by the federal government and the forty-eight states acting independently of each other, as well as through the action of a strong public opinion, railroad expenses in recent years have vastly increased. No criticism is here made of the general theory of governmental regulation, but on the other hand, no ingenuity can relieve the carriers of expenses created thereby."

President Wilson, in transmitting the memorandum of the railroad presidents to the public, characterizes it as "a lucid statement of plain truth." The president recognizing the emergency as extraordinary, continuing, said in part:

"You ask me to call the attention of the country to the imperative need that railway credits be sustained and the railroads helped in every possible way, whether by private co-operative effort or by the action, wherever feasible of governmental agencies, and I am glad to do so because I think the need very real."

The conference was certainly a fortunate one for the nation and the president is to be congratulated for opening the gate to a new world of effort in which everyone may co-operate.

There are many important problems in our complex civilization that will yield to co-operation which will not lend themselves to arbitrary rulings of commissions and financing railroads is one of them. The man with the money is a factor that cannot be eliminated from any business transaction and the public is an interested party that should always be consulted and happily the president has invited all to participate in the solution of our railroad problems.

Why Not Give Us The Facts?

The president in his talk to newspaper correspondents asked that the public be warned against reports on the situation in Mexico. He stated that there are persons in both the United States and Mexico who find it to their advantage to have trouble in Mexico and are interested in giving out false reports of the situation. The public has learned to take stories about Mexico with a grain of salt, whether they come through the regular news channels or emanate from the government at Washington. One class of stories has been discredited by future event as much as the other. If anything the unofficial statements have been more reliable than the official, probably because the former predicted trouble and uncertainty while the latter held out false hopes of quiet and order. Even the president's assurances have often been proved unjustified by facts, leading to a suspicion that they have been based on wishes instead of information.

Something has been happening in Mexico beyond question. The press has given the reports coming from various regular news sources, without color. It has not sided with any of the various kinds of revolutionists. The government's confidential emissaries have not preserved such neutrality, or at least, did not a few months ago. They were partial to Carranza and Villa until the clash between those two leaders. If there is any interest in Mexico or the United States which would be furthered by lawlessness and bloodshed, arson, rape and larceny, we should have the particulars. It is difficult to conceive how any interest would profit from the general anarchy which now seems to prevail.

There are certain concrete facts which the American people do know. Our marines were landed at Vera Cruz in April, inflicting and receiving losses. They were later displaced by soldiers under Gen. Funston. They remain-

ed until November 23, when they departed, taking with them about \$1,000,000 in Mexican customs. Why were they sent? Was it to seize a shipment of arms and ammunition consigned to Huerta? The shipment was afterwards delivered from another port, without molestation. Was it to compel a salute of twenty-one guns? It was never fired. Was it to expel Huerta? He left Mexico in July, but the troops remained until November 23. Were the troops kept at Vera Cruz to maintain order? Then why were they withdrawn at the very time when the so called constitutionalists had begun to cut each other's throats? These mysteries could be cleared by the president and the State Department. That they had good and sufficient reasons for not taking the people into their full confidence when publicity might have thwarted their purposes is recognized. But continued secrecy after the withdrawal of the troops serves no obviously useful purpose. The president might satisfy a justifiable curiosity as to Mexican affairs by practicing a little of the pitiless publicity he has so often preached.—Globe-Democrat.

Benefit of Roads to Nonabutting Property Owners

The road-building specialists of the department, in Bulletin No. 136, entitled "Highway Bonds," have the following to say about the benefit of a well-constructed highway to property owners whose property is not directly on the road to be improved:

In planning the highway system or the main market roads it will be found necessary to omit many roads the improvement of which is greatly desired by abutting landowners. The fact that such property holders must pay a tax for the bond issue is only an apparent injustice, for if the highway system is well planned the entire county will feel the benefits of the improvement. As a rule, main market roads reach the majority of producing areas, and when they are improved all land values tend to increase.

The fact that cities and larger towns are frequently taxed for bond issues to build highways outside of their own limits is sometimes made a point of debate in bond elections. It is argued that because a large part of the county wealth is within the corporate limit of such cities and towns highway bond money should also be used to construct their streets. It is even urged that the expenditure should be made proportionate to the assessed valuation within the city limits. If the proceeds of highway bond issues were distributed in this way, their purpose in many cases would be defeated. The primary object of the county highway bond issue is to build county market roads and not to improve city streets, although a high percentage of the assessed valuation may be city property. It is now known that the expenditure of city taxes on country roads is a sound principle and that it is one of the best features of State aid for highways. In Massachusetts the city of Boston pays possibly 40 per cent of the total State highway fund, but not a mile of State-aid highway has been built within its limits. New York City also pays about 60 per cent of the cost of the State highway bonds. Some State laws prohibit the expenditure of proceeds of State highway bonds within corporate limits of cities or towns.

The improvement of market roads results in improved marketing conditions, which benefit the city. Most cities are essentially dependent upon the surrounding country for their prosperity and development. The development of suburban property for residence purposes is also dependent upon highway conditions, and it is becoming evident yearly that what ever makes for an increase in rural population must be encouraged. Since the introduction of motor traffic country highways are used to an increasing extent by city residents. In fact, the cost of maintaining many country highways has been greatly increased by the presence city-owned motor vehicles. The general advance in facilities for doing country business from town headquarters when roads are improved is no inconsiderable factor in the commercial life of the community.

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